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RR RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHMR RUEHPA RUEHRN RUEHTRO
DE RUEHSA #0988/01 1341536
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 141536Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8476
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 1378
RUEHTN/AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN 6842
RUEH DU/AMCONSUL DURBAN 0955
RUEHJO/AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG 9192
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 PRETORIA 000988

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/11/2019

TAGS: [KDEM](#) [ASEC](#) [SF](#) [PGOV](#)

SUBJECT: PART 1 OF 3: A LOOK AT JACOB ZUMA'S CABINET

REF: A. PRETORIA 000942

[1](#)B. PRETORIA 000939

[1](#)C. PRETORIA 000953

[1](#)D. PRETORIA 000954

PRETORIA 00000988 001.2 OF 005

Classified By: Political Counselor Raymond L. Brown. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (SBU) President Jacob Zuma finalized his Cabinet appointments on May 10, modifying several existing ministries and creating a few new ones. Zuma increased the Cabinet's size from 28 to 34 ministries. Below are short biographies for each of the newly appointed ministers and deputies. This is the first of three cables looking at each of the Cabinet appointees. End Summary.

Cabinet Appointees

[1](#)2. (SBU) President Jacob Zuma is South Africa's fourth national leader in the post-apartheid era. See Reftels B-D for more information on Zuma's life and times.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe was the third South African leader in the post-apartheid period. Motlanthe assumed the presidency in September 2008 following the forced resignation of former President Thabo Mbeki and held office until May 8. Motlanthe previously served as a Minister in the Presidency Without Portfolio and currently is African National Congress (ANC) Deputy President. A former trade union leader, Motlanthe has broad support within the ANC-led tripartite alliance despite some hesitation by leaders in the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) that he was not a good choice to replace Mbeki. Motlanthe likes to operate behind the scenes to ease tensions within the ruling party. He played a key role in convincing allies of ANC President Jacob Zuma to allow Mbeki to continue to serve in early 2008. He has dedicated his life to the ANC and is more willing to show loyalty to the party than to individual leaders. Political analysts say as ANC Secretary General from 1997 to 2007 he spoke frankly about disarray in the party's local branches, including the party's lack of capacity and resources to develop and monitor policies. An intensely private person, Motlanthe was influenced by the Black Consciousness Movement

and was detained for 11 months following the student uprising in Soweto in 1976. After he was released, he was detained and convicted again, which led to a 10-year prison sentence on Robben Island. He was released in 1987 and joined the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe -- "Spear of the Nation." That same year, he joined South Africa's National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) as an education officer and then as NUM Secretary General until 1997. Motlanthe was born in 1949 and is married with three children. He enjoys watching soccer and is a jazz enthusiast.

¶4. (SBU) Information on National Planning Commission in the Presidency Trevor Manuel will be forthcoming (septel).

¶5. (SBU) Monitoring and Evaluating Competency Body in the Presidency Collins Chabane has emerged as one of the most powerful new officials in government. With government oversight power, he can recommend the removal or the replacement of any government minister or deputy minister. Moreover, he can suggest a realignment of government structures. Chabane previously served as Limpopo's Minister in the Executive Council (MEC) for Economic Development, Q in the Executive Council (MEC) for Economic Development, Environment, and Tourism. He became a member of the National Assembly following the 1994 election and served on the Joint Committee on Defense and Intelligence; the Standing Committee; and the Finance, Minerals, and Energy Affairs Committee, as well as the Constitutional and Management Committee. In 1990, he was elected as the Provincial Secretary-General of the ANC in the Northern Province (now Limpopo) and served in this capacity until 1998. He joined the ANC in 1980 and underwent military training in Angola in ¶1981. He holds a degree in electrical engineering. He is married with two children.

PRETORIA 00000988 002.2 OF 005

¶6. (SBU) Agricultural, Fisheries, and Forestry Minister Tina Joemat-Peterson is number four on the ANC's National Working Committee, just behind ANC spokesperson Jesse Duarte and ahead of former Arts and Culture Minister Pallo Jordan. Joemat-Peterson has long been an activist in Western and Northern Capes. She was a member of the Azanian Students Organization from 1985 to 1986 and began teaching shortly thereafter at the Pescodia Secondary School and the University of Western Cape. She joined the ANC in 1989 and became a member of the powerful South African Democratic Teacher's Union (SADTU) in 1992. She quickly became SADTU's National Representative for Northern Cape. In 1994, she was deployed as a member of the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature and served on the ANC Women's League National Executive Committee from 1998 to 2003. In 1998, she became the Northern Cape's chairperson for both the ANC Women's League and the SACP. In 2003, she became the ANC's treasurer for the Provincial Executive Committee for Northern Cape. She was born in December 1963 and is married.

¶7. (SBU) Agricultural, Fisheries, and Forestry Deputy Minister Pieter Mulder accepted this current appointment despite opposition from members of his party -- the Freedom Front Plus (FFP). He has long been thought of as close to the ANC despite leading the Afrikaner-dominated FFP. Mulder is the son of apartheid-era Information Minister Connie Mulder, who was brought down in the "Muldergate" information and bribery scandal of the 1970s. The younger Mulder formed the FFP prior to the 1994 election along with former apartheid-era general, Constand Viljoen. The FFP won nine seats in the 1994 election, four in the 1999 election, and four in 2004. Most recently, the FFP won four seats in the 2009 election. Mulder has led the party in Parliament since ¶1999. He was Deputy Defense Minister from 1989 to 1993. Mulder holds a Ph.D. and did post-graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin in international communications. Born in Randfontein in 1951, he has one son and four daughters. He reportedly enjoys playing squash and studying astronomy.

¶8. (SBU) Arts and Culture Minister Lulu Xingwana served as Agriculture and Land Affairs Minister from 2006 to 2009 and Deputy Minister of Minerals and Energy from 2004 to 2006. She replaces one of the ANC's leading intellectuals, Pallo Jordan, as the Arts and Culture Minister. In the past, Xingwana has served as a member of the Cabinet on committees such as the Investment and Employment Committee; the International Relations, Peace, and Security Committee; and Economic Sector Committee. She chaired the Southern African Development Community Regional Women's Caucus from 2002 to ¶2004. She has served on the ANC's National Working Committee and on the ANC Women's League since 1993; she became a member of Parliament in 1994. Interestingly, she did not make the ANC's National Executive Committee at the ruling party's congress in December 2007. Some pundits questioned whether it was because she was too closely aligned with former President Thabo Mbeki. She graduated from the University of Witwatersrand in 1985. Xingwana was born in September 1955 and is single.

¶9. (SBU) Arts and Culture Deputy Minister Paul Mashatile
Q9. (SBU) Arts and Culture Deputy Minister Paul Mashatile served briefly as Gauteng premier before assuming this current role. Mashatile is rumored to be a corrupt businessman, brought to power by black business leaders who have benefited extensively through Black Economic Empowerment deals in the transport sector of Gauteng. He served as Provincial Secretary of Gauteng for the ANC from 1992 to 1996 and as the MEC for Transport and Public Works from 1996 to ¶1999. He then served as MEC for Housing in the Gauteng provincial government from 1999 to 2004. He was MEC for Financial and Economic Affairs from 2004 to the time he was appointed premier. He was active in the United Democratic Front during the 1980s and was detained without trial during the State of Emergency under the apartheid government from 1985 to 1990. Upon his release, Mashatile became involved in ANC structures and has served on the National Executive Committee since 1992. He also has been involved in the SACP. He was born in 1961 and was educated at Alexandra High School. He is married, with two sons and two daughters. He enjoys reading and films.

¶10. (SBU) Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga has long had a passion for education and teaching languages. She began her career as a teacher at Orlando High School in

PRETORIA 00000988 003.2 OF 005

Soweto in 1981. Motshekga became involved in politics in 1997 becoming Deputy Secretary of the ANC Women's League, a position she held for three years. She later became a provincial legislator as an ANC member in Gauteng and most recently served in the Gauteng legislature in the Education Department. Prior to serving on educational issues, Motshekga served on the MEC for Social Services and Population Development in Gauteng from 2000 to 2004. She has been Deputy President of ANC structures in Gauteng since ¶2001. She is known to be a close Zuma ally, whose pull in the Women's League helped deliver the ANC presidency to him. In the mid-2000s, Motshekga was involved in a corruption scandal that nearly destroyed her career. There was substantial evidence that she and her family benefited financially from a trust that she developed to land a stake in a lucrative provincial pension payout contract. Newspaper reporters discovered that money from the trust went straight into Motshekga's personal bank account; Motshekga denied any wrongdoing and kept her appointments in government. She also was accused -- along with her husband -- of assisting businesses in Gauteng that helped her financially. She was educated at the University of the North and is married to former Gauteng premier Mathole Motshekga. She has four children and enjoys community work and interior design.

¶11. (U) Basic Education Deputy Minister Enver Surty previously served as the Deputy Minister of Education from 2004-2008 and as Justice and Constitutional Development

Minister under Motlanthe. He has been described as possessing "all the hallmarks of a good leader." He served as a member of Parliament in the Senate until 1994 and subsequently the National Council of Provinces from 1996 to 2004. He joined the National Assembly in 1999 and was re-deployed to the National Council of Provinces as Chief Whip, a position he held from 1999 to 2004. During his time in the legislature, he participated in select committees, including on the Justice, Safety and Security, Constitutional Affairs, and Local Government portfolios. He served on the ANC's NEC from 1999 to 2007 as an observer. Surty has an extensive legal background, serving as a human rights lawyer in Rustenberg from 1977 to 1994. He also acted on behalf of COSATU during his tenure as an advocate. Surty was born on August 15, 1953 and is married with three children. He enjoys watching and playing soccer, cricket, and squash. He is an avid reader.

112. (SBU) Communications Minister Siphwe Nyanda has little experience on the issues he will confront in this ministry. There are many media critics concerned that Nyanda, who has long had a penchant for secrecy, will struggle in his role as Communications Minister. Nyanda accompanied Zuma to Washington in October 2008, prompting speculation that he was to be appointed Defense Minister. He probably was rewarded with this position for his role in the liberation struggle as a military veteran. He is a career military officer, with a background in the ANC's military wing -- Umkhonto we Sizwe ("MK"). He attended military courses in the German Democratic Republic in the 1970s and in the Soviet Union in the mid-1980s. He chaired the Political Military Committee of the ANC from 1986 to 1988. He served as an ANC recruiting officer for the MK in the 1970s, an urban operations chief in the 1980s, and a border commanding officer in the 1980s near Swaziland. He served in the South African National Defense Force following the 1994 election and rose to the level of Chief by 2005. He has been awarded the Gold Star of South Africa and the Military Merit Medal. He has four children and was born in 1950.

113. (SBU) Deputy Communications Minister Dinah Pule is relatively unknown. She served as an MEC in the Mpumalanga legislature, working on the Land and Agricultural Affairs Committee and the Safety and Security Committee.

114. (U) Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister Sicelo Shiceka served as Provincial and Local Government Minister under Motlanthe. Shiceka is a member of the ANC's NEC. He was fired from his ANC party position in Gauteng when former premier Mbhazima "Sam" Shilowa assumed the office in 1999. Following his dismissal, he was appointed as the permanent Gauteng representative to the National Council of Provinces and served as the chairman of Parliament's collective committee on local government and administration. He has extensive service dealing with Public Service, Land and Environmental Affairs, and Security and

PRETORIA 00000988 004.2 OF 005

Constitutional Affairs portfolios.

115. (U) Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Deputy Minister Yunus Carrim has been an ANC member in Parliament since 1994. He was targeted by the Young Communist League ahead of the ANC's party congress in 2007 for allegedly "not supporting Zuma." The Young Communist League ultimately pushed out Philip Dexter, but retained Carrim. Carrim previously chaired the Public Enterprises Portfolio in the National Assembly from 2004 to 2009 and the Provincial and Local Government Portfolio from 1998 to 2004. He has served in the ANC and the SACP since the early 1970s; in the SACP, he rose from branch member to the Central Committee and Politburo. He was arrested without trial from August to December in 1976. He holds a Masters degree in sociology from the University of Warwick.

¶16. (U) Correctional Services Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula probably is one of the weakest leaders of all of Zuma's new appointments. She served for seven years as a senior official in the notoriously dysfunctional Home Affairs ministry. She has extensive ties to veterans, the Women's League, and the communist party -- all of which probably helped her to keep a job under Zuma. Married to former Defense Minister and Minister of Safety and Security Charles Nqakula, Mapisa-Nqakula has been a member of the ANC's National Executive Committee since 2007 (and served on the committee from 1993 to 1997). She served as Minister of Home Affairs from 2004 to 2009 and before that served as Deputy Minister of Home Affairs from 2002 to 2004. She served as ANC Chief Whip in Parliament in 2001. She previously served as the General Secretary of the ANC Women's League from 1993 to 1995 and rose through the ANC's military wing during the 1980s. She had extensive military training both in Angola and in the Soviet Union.

¶17. (U) Correctional Services Deputy Minister Hlengiwe Mkhize has a background in education as she was employed by the University of Zululand from 1983 to 1993. During this time she also served at University of Witwatersrand. She used her professional experiences to intensify campaigns against the apartheid regime, traveling to the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Mississippi during the 1980s. In the early 1990s, she initiated a project on the impact of political violence on children and families in the run-up to the 1994 election. This prepared her to serve as a Commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission from 1996 to 2001. She remained in the post until the commission's work ended. She became South Africa's ambassador to the Netherlands in 2005. She is married and has three children.

¶18. (C) Defense and Veterans Affairs Minister Lindiwe Sisulu is one of the stars of Zuma's team. Sisulu, daughter of legendary ANC activist Walter Sisulu, has served the ANC in a variety of capacities and has always received high marks for her performance. She was at one time a fierce supporter of Mbeki, but switched her loyalty to Zuma following Mbeki's appointment of Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka as Deputy President in ¶2005. She served as Housing Minister from 2004 to 2009 and as Intelligence Minister from 2001 to 2004 -- where she reportedly held a negative attitude toward the West. She was ¶reportedly held a negative attitude toward the West. She was Deputy Minister of Home Affairs from 1996 to 2001. A member of Parliament since 1994, Sisulu held a number of intelligence-related positions close to Zuma. From 1989 to 1990, she was Zuma's personal assistant on intelligence matters. Concurrent to this, Sisulu served as a senior leader in the ANC's Department of Intelligence and Security. She began her intelligence career in the late 1970s as a member of the MK. Rumored to be a front-runner for the position of Deputy President had Motlanthe refused the deployment, Sisulu is a long time ANC National Executive Committee leader and a fierce debater in Cabinet meeting "war-rooms." She was born in 1954 and is married.

¶19. (SBU) Deputy Defense and Veterans Affairs Minister Thabang Makwetla previously served as Mpumalanga premier from 2004 to 2009. A known supporter of Mbeki, he was expected to be removed from leadership structures of the ANC. However, his background as an SACP organizer in Botswana -- and his ties to former Mpumalanga premier and ANC Treasurer Matthews Phosa -- probably allowed Zuma to keep Makwetla as both a concession to Mbeki allies and the SACP. He was an MEC in Mpumalanga's legislature from 2001 to 2004, with positions on

PRETORIA 00000988 005.2 OF 005

the Safety and Security Committee and the Committee on Public Accounts. He served as an ANC member of Parliament from 1994 to 2001, where he held positions on the Joint Standing Committees on Defense and Intelligence. He is involved in his own business called Makwetla and Associates, which specializes in event management. Before the 1994 election,

Makwetla was an executive committee member of the ANC Youth League. He served in the MK from 1976 to 1993. Makwetla is married with two children. He enjoys music and watching sports.

¶20. (U) Information on Economic Development Minister Ebrahim Patel will be forthcoming (septel).

¶21. (U) Information on Deputy Economic Development Minister Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde will be forthcoming (septel).

¶22. (U) Energy Minister Dipuo Peters previously served as Northern Cape premier from 2004 to 2009. She rose through the ranks of the Northern Cape government, serving as an MEC on health issues and as ANC Chief Whip in the provincial legislature from 1997 to 2004. Prior to her deployment to Northern Cape, Peters served in Parliament from 1994 to 1997. She also served in the ANC Youth League, focusing on women's affairs in the early 1990s. She began her political career in the mid-1980s as a regional organizer for COSATU. Peters was educated at the University of the North, graduating with a degree in social work in 1987. She was born in 1960 and enjoys listening to the radio, reading, and exercising.

¶23. (U) Information on Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan will be forthcoming (septel).

¶24. (U) Deputy Finance Minister Musa Nhlanhla Nene is Parliament's former Finance committee chairman. Business Day political analysts describe him as "well known for his prudent approach to fiscal and macro-economic policy." Some see him as a potential replacement for Finance Minister Trevor Manuel when he decides to leave the government. Nene is said to get along well with Manuel and is a close friend of South African Reserve Bank Governor Titi Mboweni. Nene has served in Parliament since 1999 and represents Kwa-Zulu Natal and is the former ANC Secretary for the Bambatha region. Most recently, he received international attention when his chair collapsed during a national South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) television interview. The incident was captured and has been widely viewed on youtube.com. Nene took the incident in good grace at first, saying he was glad to give people something to laugh about in stressful times, but as the incident continued to receive international press he now feels it has been "enough." He has asked SABC to investigate who circulated the clip and refuses to rule out legal action.

¶25. (U) Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi was a relatively obscure choice to follow previous Health Minister Barbara Hogan. He reportedly received the position because of his ties to Deputy Health Minister Molefi Sefularo and KwaZulu Natal heavyweight Zweli Mkhize. Motsoaledi most recently served as an MEC on the Land, Agriculture, and Environment Committee in the Limpopo legislature. He has served in the Limpopo legislature since 1994, working on education and transport issues during the late 1990s. He chaired the ANC's election working group in Limpopo in 1994. During the 1980s, he helped organize the National Medical and Dental Association following the tragic death of activist Steve Biko. Some medical doctors from that period recall Motsoaledi as "very energetic, enthusiastic, and competent." He received his Bachelors of Medicine and Bachelors of Surgery from the University of Natal.

¶26. (U) Deputy Minister of Health Molefi Sefularo is a medical doctor and academic from Northwest who holds degrees from Medunsa, University of Witwatersrand, and the University of Cape Town. Long active in local Northwest ANC structures, he currently is on the Trade and Industry committee in Parliament. He has served as chairman for the ANC's Health Committee since 1993. During the 1980s, he was a UDF activist. He was born on July 9, 1957 and is married. Sefularo is interested in human rights, nature conservation, distance running, and reading.

End Part One

